1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

Lakemba, but sooner or later some nobleman would come from abroad, see it, and beg for it. The nobles of Lakemba had each his own big canoe which he provided for himself and which had no name.

Drums

Drums (*lali*) are hewn out of solid trunks of greenheart of India. Most of them come from Namuka. In shape, they suggest a short, pot-bellied, very high canoe cut off at both ends. They are placed on logs to give more resonance, and are beaten on the outer rim with two round mallets about a foot long by one or two drummers.

Big state drums (*lali vakaturanga*) had names; thus one was called *A i rongorongo i valu*, or rumor of war. It was not the custom, as in some parts of Viti Levu, to give the drum the name of a certain person or hold a festival in its honor.

Formerly drums were beaten for war and other occasions, using different rythms. Now these rythms are used for other purposes, calling a meeting together, children to school, adults to a dance, to statute labor, to church, or to a funeral.

WOMEN'S INDUSTRIES

Bark Cloth

The paper mulberry tree, of which bark cloth is made from the inner bark, is planted. It is called *masi*, and bark cloth is also called *masi*.

The men slit the tree downwards, remove the bark as a whole, and hand it over to the women. Two "leaves" are called *ngaho*; ten *ngaho* make one *tekau*. The women soak the bark in water for one morning, if it is small, but leave it overnight if it is a large piece. Then they scrape off the outer bark with shells and roll up the strips of inner bark to keep. The process as witnessed was as follows:

When a woman wishes to beat out the bark, she soaks the strips and beats them on a heavy flat log called *ndundua*. The mallet used is heavy with four sides, two or three of which are grooved lengthwise. The strip is wet, beaten out to the required breadth with the grooved side of the mallet, folded, beaten again, folded a second time, and finished off by beating with the smooth side of the mallet. The rough ends are then cut off. The folds are smoothed out with the hand and the pieces dried in the sun. These strips are called *tutu* if required to paste together into sheets (*ngatu*); if used as they are they are simply called *masi*. Formerly single pieces were used as loin cloths, now as kilts or scarfs on special occasions as at circumcision. Single pieces are sometimes beaten out very thin, giving them a glossy appearance, and were formerly thus used as turbans.

Single pieces are sometimes smoked; first oil scented with *mamba* fruit is applied; then a shallow hole is made in the ground, planted about with four sticks, round which some twenty or forty pieces of bark-cloth are placed, and smoked with the roots

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

feasts connected with marriage, death, and ceremonial exchanges, the visit of a chief, a government official, or a canoe from another island. War dances and kava *meke* are performed by able-bodied men of the community, from 15 to 50 years old. Dances such as the sitting dance (*vakamalolo*) and fan dance (*meke iri*) are performed by women. At small gatherings only the young, unmarried girls, who are not pregnant and have no children, dance, but at intervillage exchanges all the women up to about 40, who are not pregnant, take part.

Old people and children form the chorus. They sit in a close group on one side of the dancers and reinforce the chanting, occasionally clap the rhythm with their hands, and beat the drums. At large gatherings several drums are beaten, at small ones only one. The usual dance drum (*lali ni meke*) is a solid, canoe-shaped block of greenheart with a small rectangular concavity in the body. A youth sits with the dance drum clasped with both arms and presses the cavity against his chest which acts as a sounding board. He breathes in and out with the rhythm while another youth sits in front of him and beats the drum with two small sticks. Sometimes the dance drum is beaten while it lies on the ground, cavity downward, but natives say the tone thus produced is flat. *Meke* are occasionally accompanied by the bamboo drum (*nduvu*), a hollow section of bamboo about 14 cm. in diameter and 60 cm. long. The seated drummer holds it upright before him with both hands and drops it to the ground rhythmically. Bamboo drums are scarce in Lau where large bamboo does not grow. They are imported from Viti Levu.

The leader of the dance usually begins intoning in a loud, shrill voice. Almost immediately the group movements and the accompanying beat of the drum begin, but occasionally the drums precede the leader. After the introductory phrase the chorus joins in the chant until the end of the strophe. After a short pause the second strophe is begun in the same fashion. The whole *meke* is repeated many times.

Chanting is very shrill and loud, and resembles yelling rather than singing. A scale of several intervals is used. A limited number of movements, which interpret the words or emotions of the dance, are repeated over and over in the *meke*. Every part of the body, including the eyelids, eyes, fingers, and feet, are active. However, the gestures alone do not make clear the meaning of the *meke*, even to a native observer. A few simple gestures like the moving of wings or the paddling of oars are stylized.

Meke performances last for hours, often throughout the night, and as they progress the performers and spectators grow more and more excited. The chanting, drumming, and clapping become louder, and the body movements more intense. The war dances, which formerly served to excite the warriors to a frenzy, now serve as emotional release. The natives say that most of the *meke* have an erotic appeal.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

763 The female relatives of the deceased begin to wail. The words are not formalized. On Kambara the following cry is repeated over and over: "Ei valu vei au . . . valu vei! E a wei!" or "Wei, a wei, ai valu vei au!" (Alas, woe is me, woe, alas!) For an individual considered to be a great loss to the community—such as a young person, especially the first-born of a ranking clan—the wailing is very loud and lasts from the hour of death until burial. For an old and feeble person of low rank there is less wailing.

765 A widow (*ndawai*) cuts her hair close to the head and wears old mats for one hundred nights. She wears a string of hibiscus bark around her neck, which she knots every night in order to keep count (*mbongi*) or a pumice (*soata*) stone is rubbed white, and a black mark made with a brand every night. After the tenth night, she is allowed to fish. After one hundred nights she is allowed to remarry.

764 I witnessed six burials on Kambara and one on Lakemba. Several of these have been described in order to show variations of the death ceremonial pattern due to rank, age, and circumstance.

Death of the high chief

766 The death of the high chief is an important social, economic, and ceremonial event in the life of the Lauans. It is one of the few occasions on which all the islands of the group function as a unit.

When Ratu Finau, high chief of Lau, died at Lakemba word of the death spread by canoe throughout the Lau group, and preparations for the funeral ceremonies began immediately. On each island were collected whales' teeth, mats, tapa, and food if it was available. Members of the leading clans of the main islands (including men, women, circumcised youths, and young girls belonging to the upper class) were selected to attend the funeral ceremonies. About two weeks after the death had occurred they were picked up by a cutter belonging to the district commissioner of Lau. I accompanied the Kambara group. The cutter stopped at Namuka and Oneata to board representatives and tribute and landed at Tumbou, the village of the high chief at Lakemba.

Every house in Tumbou was crowded with natives from all the islands in the chiefdom of Lau, except the most remote, Fulanga, Ongea, Vatoa, and Ono. The whole village was under a strict tabu which lasted from the time of the chief's death until his burial. No one was allowed outside his house except in necessity, and everyone who appeared in the village was required to wear black. Men and women wore kilts and shirts or blouses of barkcloth, tied old, frayed mats around their waists, and cut their hair. The hair of the women, cut 2 to 5 cm. from the head, was shorter than that of the men. The village ceremonial ground was kept clear by the high chief's bodyguard, composed exclusively of men from Naiau. Dressed like warriors in kilts of tapa, with oiled bodies and blackened faces, they stood at attention with a club on the shoulder, guarding the entrance to paths leading across the ceremonial ground.

[534] The only sound to be heard was that of the nine conch shells blown continuously from the time of the chief's death until his burial, by men of the nobility of Lakemba. The conch shell blowers sat under a pavilion beside the Chief's House (Vale Levu), and blew the shells continuously in four or five hour shifts. This is called *a nondra tangi na turanga*; at a chief's funeral it replaces the usual wailing, for only the chief's nearest relatives are allowed to wail.

Between death and burial, the body lay in the chief's house in a closed coffin of

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

and Tokalau where a man named Velana was killed. In the village of Tokalau four stones, forming a rectangle, mark the spot where a man dropped dead. A pile of stones at Toka, Fulanga, also mark a burial place.

Formerly, members of the deceased's clan would chop off their little fingers with an adz.

WARFARE

The war complex in Lau was closely allied with the ancestor cult and the concept of rank based on mana. Informants agree that warfare and fortified villages were introduced into Lau by the immigrants who formed the chiefs' phratry. It is said that before the migration from Viti Levu, the land people lived peacefully together in scattered hamlets. A state of tension grew out of the keen interclan and intervillage rivalry for prestige, enhanced by the desire for power on the part of the warriors of the ranking noble clans.

Warfare in Lau usually took the form of raids between villages led by rival war leaders of the chief group. Rivalry often centered around the desire for women. The attacking party would capture a high ranking woman, perhaps the wife of a chief from another village, and the affront would be met by a counter attack.

Tales of warfare are full of treachery. The object was to outwit the opponent and save one's own skin. To risk one's life was considered stupid. Attacks were usually launched only by forces superior in strength to those of the defendants. Otherwise an attempt was made to lure the leaders into ambush and to attack them singly or in groups.

Great care was taken to insure the success of a raid. The attacking party secured the assistance of relatives. If they planned to attack a village on another island, the warriors used a related village on that island as their landing place, base of supplies, and ally. The priest retired to the temple and propitiated the war god (*kalou ni valu*). He made an offering of kava to the god and he prayed to the god until he was possessed. He then took the ceremonial club of the clan and stood it up on the handle in the center of the god house. If the club stood up unsupported he knew that the god had entered the weapons of the warriors and the raid would be successful. If it fell down, the raid would not be successful, and the expedition was abandoned.

Four days before the attack the warriors held a meeting in the village, and the war gong (*lali ni valu*) was sounded. It consisted of a hollow log of *tavola (Terminalia catappa)* or *mbuambua (Guettarda speciosa)* wood about 1.5 meters long. Two men, each with two sticks, stood on opposite sides of the gong and beat in unison. The first drummer was called *tau,* the second *vakataungande*. The complicated, rhythmic war beat was called *nduki tu a lali ni mbakola*. During the four days before the raid the men prepared their weapons. Sexual intercourse and the stealing of property were forbidden

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

Conch shells (*ndavui*) were kept in the sacred caves. When propitiated by the priest the god entered the shells. They were then blown by the priest and the blast was considered to be the voice of the god. Moto says that when he was a young man, the land people on Kambara went with the priest to a sacred cave during a drought. After they performed a kava ceremony outside the cave the priest entered and prayed. When he blew the conch shell in the cave the people know he had contacted the god.

Offerings were formerly presented at a sacred stone called Kalou, found in the hamlet site of Toka, southwest of Naivindamu on the shore of the Fulanga lagoon. It consists of an almost cylindrical block of unworked limestone, about 60 cm. high and with a diameter of 35 cm., set on a pile of stone about 30 cm. high. The natives of Naivindamu say the stone contains mana.

Near the site of Onemata on Kambara lies a block of limestone which projects about one meter out of the ground. Here the natives say a man, who is now an ancestor god, entered the stone. The place is sacred.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP

The ancestor cult was introduced into Lau by the group of immigrants who founded the chiefs' phratry. It has become the keynote of Lauan religion. The pattern of ranked clans of the upper class was reflected in a celestial hierarchy of ancestral gods. Ndengei, the snake god of Viti Levu, was the most powerful forefather, because he was the originator of the group. Then came the forefather gods of each noble clan in order of rank which was originally determined by success in warfare. The ancestor gods were war gods, the ghosts of famous warriors. They were propitiated to gain mana for enhancing social prestige, and their eventual rank in the celestial hierarchy depended upon their mana-bestowing powers as reflected in the successes and failures of their clans.

The concept of mana associated with the ancestor cult is strong in the native pattern of thought. According to this concept mana is the vital force or potency which gives superhuman significance to persons or things: to human beings, animals, plants or inanimate objects. Its presence in a person or thing is not attributed to power inherent in the thing itself but to some spiritual force lodging in it. The spiritual force is frequently one of the beings who peopled the superhuman world of the Lauans before the advent of Christianity. The most powerful of these beings were the ancestor gods.

The first-born of each noble clan was the temporary repository of the mana of the clan's ancestral forefathers. The chiefs had the strongest forefathers and the high chief was most sacred because theoretically he received mana from the most powerful ancestor gods.

The ancestor gods of each noble clan were incarnated in from one to three

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

and a head piece—fitted together and tied with sennit. Usually this type of headrest is carefully made and highly polished. The natives say that formerly headrests of similar shape were made in one piece and called *sauthoko*.

The *hahapo* is a Tongan type of headrest (*fafapo* in Tonga) made of a single piece of *mbau* wood (fig. 15 *a, b*). It is distinguished by its fine long curves and delicate structure.

Roughly finished blocks of wood (*tchiki* or *tekitcki*) are frequently used as headrests (fig. 14, *a*).

A section of bamboo, about 35 cm. long, with two legs of greenheart attached by means of sennit, is called *kali nduzu*. This type of headrest is imported from Viti Levu, inasmuch as large bamboo does not grow in southern Lau.

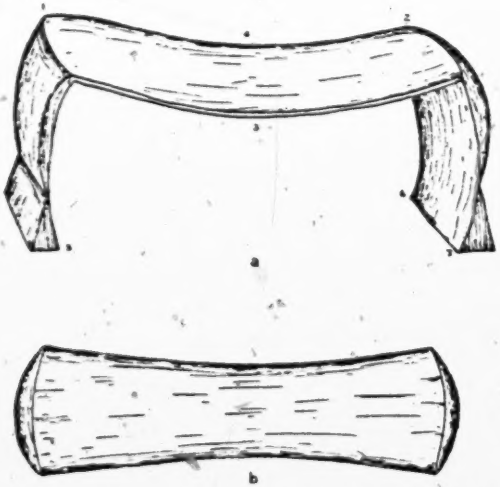


FIGURE 15.—Headrest, *hahapo* type. **a**, side view, 1-2, 30 cm.; 1-3, 9.5 cm.; 3-5, 12.5 cm.; 6-7, 10.5 cm.; 3-4, 7 cm. **b**, view from above.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

An important and very specialized craft in southern Lau is the making of large wooden slit-gongs (*lali*). They are made of a boat-shaped section of greenheart, hollowed out and with an open slot on one side. They are struck on the outside with a pair of wooden beaters. Slit-gongs are made and played in pairs, one large and one small. Two or more pairs are placed at intervals in the village. They are played by youths or men to mark village activities. Each ceremony—such as a funeral procession, the lifting of the

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

322 534 mourning tabu, or the call to service in the mission church—has its stylized gong beat (fig. 4).

The natives are sensitive to the quality of gong tones, and full, round tones are much admired. A good gong maker is known throughout the group, and his gongs are recognized by their shape and sound. Namuka became the center of the gong industry in Christian times through the gong maker, Metui of Mbutolu clan. The natives believe that Metui came from Kambara. Slit-gongs from Namuka are in demand all over Lau and on Viti Levu. Today most of the men of Undu, Kambara, know how to make gongs, but only one or two men are really skillful.

Dance gongs (*lali ni meke*), also called *vakamalolo* gongs (*lali ni vakamalolo*), are also made on Namuka. This gong consists of a small canoe-shaped block of greenheart about 1 meter long, with a small rectangular opening on the flat or upper side. The true drum or membranaphone is absent in Lau.

The natives say that formerly panpipes (*nduvu soro*) were made on Kambara. They consisted of five or six pieces of bamboo of equal diameter and various lengths, tied together with hibiscus twist.

Nose flutes (*nduvu tavu*) were also made. They consisted of a length of bamboo about 35 cm. long and 5 cm. in diameter with 4 holes cut in the bamboo. The flute was played through the nose.

KAVA CUP

322 415 272 The kava cup (*mbilo ni yanggona*) is made by men from the pointed end of a ripe coconut. The shell is scraped thin from the point outward with a shell or a piece of glass so that the point is emphasized and the striations are visible. It is polished inside and out and is rubbed with oil. Kava cups are occasionally made of greenheart.

WEAPONS

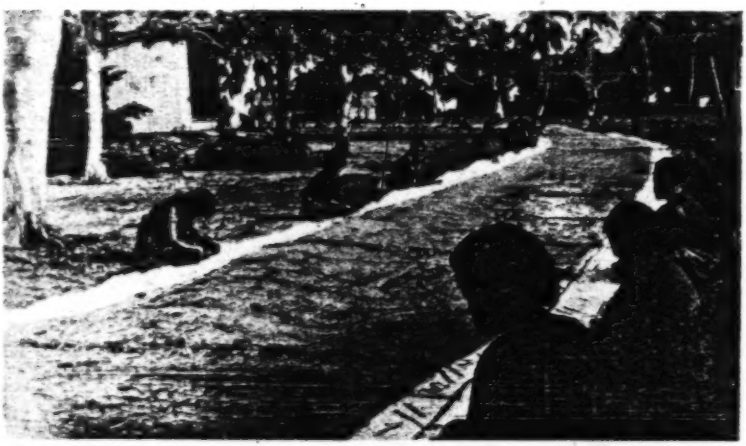
322 411 The most important weapons in Lau were the club (*i malungu*), the spear (*moto*), the bow (*ndakai tchitchi*), and the sling (*i rambo*).

Clubs were made by specialists, called *matai ni malungu*, mainly of *thau* (*Casuarina nodiflora*) wood, carved with designs which were accentuated with lime. Many different types of clubs were used. Those known to informants were: *totokia, kiekickavu, nggato, ndondonu, thulathula, malungu ni paki, linga ni marama*, and *manda*. There were also throwing clubs called *i kolo* and short clubs with thin handles and thick heads called *mbowai*, used for hand to hand conflict.

Spears were made by specialists, called *matai ni moto*. One-pointed spears were called *moto* and multi-pointed spears were called *saisai*. An effective

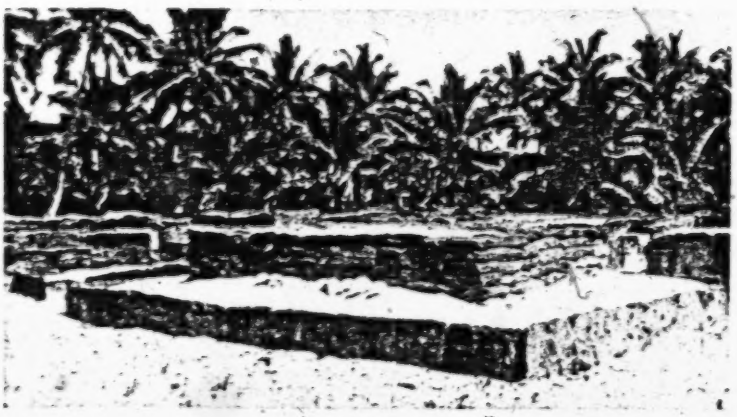
2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

766
[287
241
516]



A

[534
333]



B

A, DEATH RITES FOR HIGH CHIEF OF LAKEMBA. A LONG STRIP OF TAPA (TONGAN *NGATU*) STRETCHING FROM THE CHIEF'S HOUSE TO THE BURIAL MOUND FORMS A CARPET FOR THE FUNERAL PROCESSION. WOMEN IN MOURNING SIT WITH BOWED HEADS ON EITHER SIDE. B, GRAVE OF THE CHIEF OF KAMBARA IN THE CEMETERY AT TOKALAU VILLAGE, KAMBARA. THE EARTH MOUND OF RECTANGULAR GROUND PLAN IS SHAPED LIKE A TRUNCATED PYRAMID WITH TWO STONE-FACED STEPS. TEN CONCH SHELLS BLOWN AT THE FUNERAL LIE ON THE FIRST STEP.

[End Plate 1]

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

867 157 expressed in sullenness and fits of anger in adult life, and the subterfuge develops into a cultivated cunningness greatly admired by the natives.

857 Young children spend much time in the company of their brothers and sisters and of other children in the same age group. When together they are noisy, in contrast to their subdued behavior in the presence of adults. Younger brothers and sisters defer to older and especially to the first born. Older brothers take advantage of their position and make the younger ones run errands. Brothers, sisters, and cousins all play together until they are seven or eight years old.

868 857 524 Children play in the village or on the beach. They have no fear of the water, and learn to dog paddle and look out for sharks soon after their first sea bath at the age of one year. Their favorite water sport is playing with toy canoes made of coconut husks with a sail of a large leaf. Each toy boat has a name. The children talk to their canoes and frequently they have canoe races at low tide. As they grow older the boys take small three-pointed spears, and in twos and threes stand on the shore and spear little fish in the coral pockets or the breaking surf. Little girls, on the other hand, learn to dive for shellfish. From infancy children have a familiarity with the sea which they carry into adulthood. When Kambarans drown, it is not usually from inability to [776] keep afloat, but from fear of the shark god which is sacred to the island. Children often amuse themselves by drawing crude pictures in the sand with a stick, or by running races on the beach. They also play hop-scotch, jump rope, and marbles.

868 534 From infancy the child is accustomed to hear and feel the rhythmic harsh chant-singing which is Lauan music. Soon he begins to imitate the expressions of his elders and to learn to sing and dance himself. Little boys often play on the large slit wooden gongs, and soon are able to play the second gong in complicated duets with older boys.

10:St. Johnston G-5 (no date) 1918
OQ6 Lau OQ6

man, though of a somewhat dreamy nature, and although he pretended to laugh at these tales of olden days, I could see that he more than half believed them. But being intelligent he was, at all events, able to tell a connected story, and also help me elicit one from others; and some of the tales I heard then I now set down.

"Did you hear that, sir?" he said, suddenly, one night as we were seated on the beach with some of the local islanders round a little wood fire, kept up more for the sake of re-lighting the oft-renewed *sulukas*, or native cheroots, than for actual warmth.

"That" was the distant beating of a *lali*, the big wooden drum found in all Lauan villages. The air was still, yet the sound was but faint that came to us from over the great lagoon that stretches between Doi and Ono Islands. I had several times heard the Ono *lali* before; and on calm days such as this it had seemed quite close, and certainly different from this faint sound, which now had ceased altogether. Some of the men looked at each other.

"Perhaps it is *Sagasagawalé*, for I know of no meeting to be summoned at Ono to-night, and why else should the drum be sounded?" said one of them, a little awkwardly.

"Don't be a fool," said the Chief, with a curt laugh. "These are enlightened times, and

[text continues on p. 70]

10:St. Johnston G-5 (no date) 1918
OQ6 Lau OQ6

and walked along for some distance, the islanders joining our little retinue behind and asking, with many jests and flashes of white teeth, the latest gossip from "the capital." Presently, a horseman approached, splendidly upright, and making a fine picture with his great head of hair carefully combed out, and his proud cast of countenance. But his saddlery would hardly have passed muster in Rotten Row, for it consisted of a loose sack thrown across the pony, and a short length of rope twisted loosely round the animal's nose by a noose in the middle, the two ends running backwards to form the reins! Equipped thus, he yet maintained a beautiful seat; and at our approach vaulted off with an astonishing dexterity, and remained standing until we had passed, a smile of welcome lighting up his handsome features.[1] I heard my clerk ask him where he was going (the usual form of salutation in these islands, and not intended for unseemly curiosity), and his reply was, "To the next town to let them know the Turagas have arrived."

On nearing the town our approach was sighted by watchful boys, who raced back with a flash of brown legs, and presently we heard the deep booming of the *lali*[2] announcing our arrival. Passing along the main street of the town, bor-

[1] According to Polynesian custom no one may be (literally) raised to a higher position than a chief.
[2] Hollow wooden drum.